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Summary record of the 21st meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 7 December 2017, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Mr. Tommo Monthe ..... (Cameroon)
Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Ruiz Massieu

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda item 136: Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019 (*continued*)

Revised estimates relating to the Office of the Victims' Rights Advocate under section 1, Overall policymaking, direction and coordination, section 29D, Office of Central Support Services, and section 36, Staff assessment (A/72/7/Add.27 and A/72/373)

1. **Mr. Huisman** (Director, Programme Planning and Budget Division), introducing the Secretary-General's report on revised estimates relating to the Office of the Victims' Rights Advocate under section 1, Overall policymaking, direction and coordination, section 29D, Office of Central Support Services, and section 36, Staff assessment (A/72/373), said that the report was submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 71/297, in which the Assembly welcomed the steps taken to introduce victims' assistance support functions at Headquarters and in the field, and looked forward to future proposals from the Secretary-General in that regard. The total revised estimates proposed in the report amounted to an additional $1.3 million, comprising $0.9 million under section 1, Overall policymaking, direction and coordination, and $0.4 million under section 29D, Office of Central Support Services. The Assembly was requested to approve the additional resources, which would represent a charge against the contingency fund, and the establishment of four posts, comprising one Assistant Secretary-General, one P-4, one P-3 and one General Service (Other level), under section 1, Overall policymaking, direction and coordination.

2. **Mr. Ruiz Massieu** (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/72/7/Add.27), said that the resource requirements arising from the Secretary-General's proposal would amount to $1,326,500. The Advisory Committee had received very limited information with respect to the staffing requirements for the Office of the Victims' Rights Advocate, despite the fact that it had previously recommended that the Secretary-General should provide full justification for any proposed requirements related to that Office and the Office of the Special Coordinator on Improving the United Nations Response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, taking into account all existing resources dedicated to dealing with sexual exploitation and abuse issues in the Secretariat, as well as in other relevant United Nations system entities.

3. The Advisory Committee questioned the appropriateness of the proposed structure of the Office and the apparent change of reporting lines for the Advocate, since the Secretary-General had proposed the establishment of the Office in his report on special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (A/71/818). The Advisory Committee was particularly concerned about the unorthodox proposal that the Advocate, a senior-level post funded through regular budget resources, should report to the Special Coordinator, a temporary senior-level position funded through extrabudgetary resources. The Advisory Committee recommended that an optimal structure for all issues related to sexual exploitation and victims' rights should be submitted for consideration by the General Assembly at its seventy-third session.

4. In the light of those concerns, the Advisory Committee recommended approval of the temporary establishment of the proposed structure and related posts for the Office of the Victims' Rights Advocate for 12 months. That included the temporary establishment of four positions under section 1, Overall policymaking, direction and coordination, for the period 1 January to 31 December 2018, with the expectation that the Secretary-General would provide a full assessment of whether there was a continuing need for them beyond 2018. The Advisory Committee recommended reductions of 15 per cent in the overall amount proposed for official travel of staff; $209,500 for the alteration of premises; and 20 per cent for furniture and equipment.

The meeting rose at 10.10 a.m.